

GARBAGE

GAZETTE

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CT DEP Launches Don't Stick Me With Your "Sharps"! Campaign

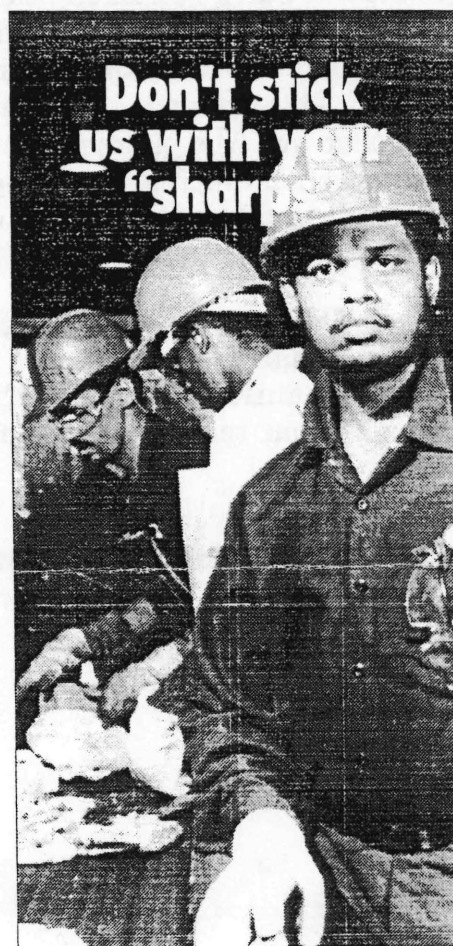
Home-generated needles and syringes ("sharps") that are carelessly disposed of can cause a host of problems, particularly for workers in the waste disposal and recycling industries. Loose needles tossed into the trash can cause needlestick injuries to waste haulers, children, pets or wildlife. Sharps that end up in recyclable containers may mistakenly find their way to the sorting line at Intermediate Processing Centers (IPCs) where they can rupture, again exposing workers to accidental needlestick injuries. Sharps flushed down the toilet can end up on beaches and riverbanks, presenting a hazard to users of Connecticut's shoreline.

In order to help address this problem, CT DEP's Recycling Program is launching a campaign to educate home-users of needles and syringes about safe disposal. The campaign is being coordinated with the CT Affiliate of the American Diabetes Association and the Connecticut Pharmacists Association. The educational materials available include; a brochure (available in both Spanish and English), a poster and a radio spot. The radio spot will air on both Spanish and English-speaking stations this September. Funding for this campaign has been provided through a grant from the U.S. EPA, under the Medical Waste Tracking Act.

The educational materials focus on the need to protect the health and safety of workers in the waste collection and recycling industries, hence the theme; "Don't Stick Me With Your Sharps". CT DEP recommends that home-users of sharps place these items in puncture-

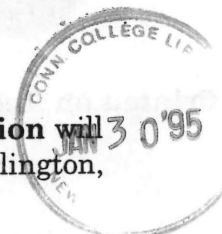
resistant hard plastic or metal containers, using the original cap or lid and heavy-duty tape to seal the full container before disposing of it in the trash. Containers should be labeled "DO NOT RECYCLE". Disinfection of needles and syringes with a bleach solution prior to disposal is also recommended. Consumers may choose to purchase containers at their local pharmacy which are specially designed to hold sharps.

To receive a free copy of a brochure and/or poster, please contact Meg Enkler, Recycling Education Coordinator at (203) 566-8722. Educational materials will also be distributed to local pharmacies and municipal recycling coordinators this September.



Upcoming Meeting

Ash-VII -- The 7th International Conference on Ash Management & Utilization will be held on November 15-16, 1994 at the Stouffer Concourse Hotel, Crystal City, Arlington, VA. For more information contact Richard Will at (800) 627-8913.



Connecticut HAZNET Holds First Organizational Meeting

The first meeting of CT HAZNET, a group of public and non-profit representatives interested in household hazardous waste issues, occurred June 29 at DEP's Hartford office. The meeting was well attended and several issues affecting municipalities were discussed.

Recurrent themes in the meeting included offering collection or disposal options to residents on an ongoing basis, the future of Conditionally Exempt Small Quantity Generators, and providing local residents with public education on non-toxic alternatives and how to properly dispose of their hazardous waste.

CT HAZNET will meet on a quarterly basis. The next meeting will be on Thursday, September 15, 1994 at 10:00 a.m. at DEP's 79 Elm Street office. CT HAZNET is open to public and non-profit organizations interested in household hazardous waste issues. Just two months after organizing, the group already has 50 members from across the state. Contact Tom Metzner at (203) 566-8722 for more information.

DEP Issues Guidelines for Sheet Leaf Composting

Sheet leaf composting is the application and incorporation of leaves on cropland actively devoted to agricultural production, as a soil amendment and mulch. Municipalities in Connecticut now have an opportunity to support local agriculture through public/private partnerships with farmers for the recycling of leaves. These partnerships can be mutually beneficial in that sheet leaf composting (SLC) provides the farmer with a source of organic matter and the municipality with a leaf recycling option. SLC may be particularly beneficial to towns which have not made provisions for leaf recycling or which have more leaves than can be handled at their registered leaf composting facility. It also provides farmers with a unique opportunity to diversify and supplement their farm income while helping to solve a waste management issue.

Connecticut's Soil and Water Conservation Districts are available to help match municipalities with farmers who are interested in practicing SLC. Farmers with Agricultural Sales Tax Exemption Permits are eligible to participate in the program. They are required to notify DEP within 30 days prior to accepting leaves, follow minimal operational requirements, and report to DEP on the quantity of leaves recycled. The towns must work closely with the farmer and residents to provide leaves that are free of trash, and must also report quantities of leaves recycled to DEP on their municipal recycling form. Reporting leaf quantities by both parties is very important because leaves which are SLC are counted toward the municipal recycling rate and statewide 40% recycling goal.

A 4-page Sheet Leaf Composting Primer, which details the practices which need to be followed, has been sent to the local recycling coordinator in each of Connecticut's 169 municipalities. Anyone who would like a copy of this Primer or who has questions about the program should contact Earl Beebe at (203) 566-8722.

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